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Patterson Fletcher, 50 years
of service

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PATTERSON FLETCHER CO

Fort Wayne.
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PATTERSON FLETCHER CO. FORT WAYNE, IND. 50th ANNIVERSARY

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Patterson Fletcher

50 Years of Service

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A Word From Mr. Fletcher . . .

Being in one business for 50 years in itself does not mean so much as the solid and lasting friendships and associations formed through those years with customers, suppliers and other businesses.

It also gives a sense of pleasure to know that a true service has been performed for the community—to know that the service has been appreciated to an extent that Patterson-Fletcher has been able to prosper and grow steadily.

We here at Patterson-Fletcher look forward to the next 50 years as a continuing opportunity to be genuinely helpful to Fort Wayne.

Harry R. Fletcher

FORT WAYNE AND ALLEN COUNTY
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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INDIANA COLLECTION

Something About Mr. Fletcher

Patterson-Fletcher attributes its success largely to the fact that it is a well rounded store—it is the clothing store for the successful business and professional man, the smartly dressed young man—the farmer and industrial worker. And it is Harry Fletcher who knows and understands the wants of such a varied trade. A man of many interests, Mr. Fletcher is shown at the left in his victory garden, which has been one of the top-flight gardens during the war years.

It is told of Mr. Fletcher that during the 1920's Mrs. Fletcher drove down to the store one evening to meet him. When he tried to start their car, the battery stubbornly refused to function. While he cranked, Mrs. Fletcher bought some flowers at a nearby corner stand. After much perspiring effort on Mr. Fletcher's part, the car still would not start. Looking around, he spied Mrs. Fletcher coming with the flowers. "Put 'em on the motor," he called—much to the delight of passers-by, "the darned thing is dead!"

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It takes more than that to give a thumbnail sketch of Harry Fletcher. However, it does help in understanding why he has become so well liked. Such quick wit is the proper seasoning for a business judgment which has matured for more than 50 years.

In recognition of his achievements he has been elected president of the National Association of Retail Clothiers and Furnishers and also of the Indiana Association of Retail Clothiers and Furnishers.

As president of the Harrison Street Association he has been instrumental in obtaining many improvements on this business thoroughfare, chief among which was the elimination of the bad curve at Harrison and Baker Streets.

Devoting considerable time to public projects, Mr. Fletcher has taken an active part in Community Fund Drives for years, was president of the Boy Scouts for two years and was chairman of the last Y.M.C.A. drive. Also, he was first president of the Optimist Club, a charter member of Quest Club, member of Kiwanis Club and a 32nd degree Mason, Shriner and Royal Jester.

Mr. Fletcher, in addition to enjoying nearly all sports, is an ardent hunter. One of his best pals is his son, Sam, who has been a party to his father's annual hunting trips since he was 14 years old.

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Mrs. Patterson

The picture above is that of a woman without whose whole-hearted cooperation and faith in Mr. Fletcher the history of Patterson-Fletcher might have been a far different story.

When Mr. Rubin S. Patterson died in 1906, his widow, Mrs. Harriett T. Patterson, was left as sole owner of the concern. During the period of eleven years that Mr. Fletcher had worked in the store, Mrs. Patterson had gained a great confidence in his ability. It was, therefore, without hesitation that she adopted him as the managing partner and part owner in the business and changed the name to Patterson-Fletcher.

Mrs. Patterson soon after moved to California but maintained an active interest in the store until recent years. Her good judgment and keen business ability have made her a valuable partner of Mr. Fletcher's even though she seldom came to Fort Wayne more than once a year. An example of her keen foresight is found in the fact that she agreed completely with Mr. Fletcher in moving the store to its present location in 1917 when other business advisers said that for Patterson-Fletcher to leave Calhoun Street would be disastrous.

Mr. Fletcher has often said that he knows of no partner other than Mrs. Patterson with whom he could have worked more effectively throughout their many years in business. The esteem of the families resulted in naming the first Fletcher boy after the Patterson's—Patterson Fletcher. Proof of their splendid partnership is the establishment of a sound, nationally-recognized business which has been able to weather bad times and maintain stability during boom times.

Dwight Shirey (left) and Sam Fletcher

Sam and Dwight

Sam Fletcher and Dwight Shirey, as a team, are gradually assuming the major responsibilities at Patterson-Fletcher as "Dad" Fletcher begins to relinquish the reins.

However, the partnership of these two men antedates by several years their Patterson-Fletcher association. They first became acquainted in Fort Wayne's old Jefferson School and their strong friendship continued throughout their days at Central High School. After completing high school, the two boys got their heads together and decided to sample a year of schooling at a small denominational school at Lake Forest on the high bluffs of Lake Michigan.

Their first intention was to spend only a year at Lake Forest and then complete their college work at a large university. However, early in the first year, Sam conceived the idea of starting a clothing store. At the end of the first year's operation, he invited Dwight, his roommate, to join him in the enterprise. So thoughts of leaving Lake Forest disappeared, and in the three remaining years of college Sam and Dwight operated a profitable "Campus Shop" which provided clothes from shoes to hats for practically all the boys on the campus and most of the professors.

After graduation, Sam went to Europe for a "good look around" and Dwight, with three former high school buddies, toured the West and parts of Canada and Mexico in an old Ford.

Playtime over, Sam and his father invited Dwight to continue the "Campus Shop" partnership, but this time inside the walls of Patterson-Fletcher. That was in 1925. Sam is Vice-President of the store and the realty company which owns the building, and Dwight is Secretary-Treasurer of the same two companies.

1895—Old Calhoun Street location. Mr. Fletcher 3rd from left

The Story of Patterson-Fletcher

The story of all businesses is a tale of men and their achievements. So it is with Patterson-Fletcher.

Mr. Harry Fletcher came to Fort Wayne just 50 years ago to become clothing buyer, chief salesman, window display and advertising man for Mr. Rubin S. Patterson's men's clothing store. The store was then located on Calhoun Street across from the court house—the building now occupied by Woolworths.

The store prospered, and eleven years later was doing an annual business of $85,000. However, Mr. Patterson, after a long illness, died in that year, and Mr. Fletcher became the partner of his widow, Mrs. Harriett T. Patterson. The name was changed at that time to Patterson-Fletcher.

The store's volume of business continued to grow until in 1917 it had exceeded the $200,000 mark. In fact, Patterson-Fletcher was rapidly outgrowing its Calhoun Street location, and it was then that Mr. Fletcher determined to move to larger quarters.

1945—Present Harrison and Wayne Street location

His selection of the present location on the corner of Wayne and Harrison Streets was considered at that time to be business suicide, for Fort Wayne had but one commercial thoroughfare—Calhoun Street. And Harrison Street was then a street of homes, a livery stable, a Synagogue and very little else.

However, instead of failure as prophesied by bankers, friends and others, Patterson-Fletcher's first year of business at Wayne and Harrison was nearly twice what it had been on Calhoun Street the previous year . . . something over $400,000.

From that time on the trend has been steadily upward—new departments were added: shoes, women's ready-to-wear, luggage, golf, sports apparel and riding equipment—until now the annual business is nearly one and a half million dollars. Thus, through its sound policies and the support of the public has Patterson-Fletcher grown from its modest beginnings to its present position . . . a nationally recognized enterprise—esteemed in its own community.

P-F

Patterson-Fletcher-C

A strong pride in its home community and a feeling of responsibility has kept Patterson-Fletcher ever alert to opportunities to be of service. Over a period of years the store has participated whole-heartedly in public projects and found many occasions to be of help in supporting activities for World War II.

Picture number one shows a group of Patterson-Fletcher employees who volunteered to shuck corn for farmers during the farm labor shortage. Working in crews, these people were helpful to several farmers in harvesting.

Number two is Patterson-Fletcher's Air Arm booth, installed early in the war to aid in the enlistment of aviation cadets. Shown in the booth is orchestra leader Wayne King who, with other well known per programs. A to ceived cadet and nearly 180 training.

Pictured in num serving the W Hostesses for Scandals Girls.

The Communit charity of Patte aided it in ever four is a group store for needy sale was held, given on custo

Community Force

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d in the enlisting
0 young men re-
s at this booth,
ed for air corps

recruiting booth
Corps program.
George White's

ways been a pet
and the store has
Shown in picture
collected by the
Wayne. A special
an allowance was
ing. These trade-

ins were then contributed to the Community Chest for distribution to these unfortunates.

Realizing that the flood of returning servicemen were having difficulty in finding clothing, Patterson-Fletcher set aside one-third of its entire stock of men's suits for them in the Gold Eagle Shop. Shown in picture five is salesman Dick Thompson, himself a war veteran, helping a soldier to pick his first suit of civilian clothing.

Among their many other public spirited acts, Patterson-Fletcher was the first store in Fort Wayne to remain open on Monday evenings as a courtesy to defense workers. Thus the store has attempted to show in full measure its appreciation to the community which has supported it so well.

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Scrapbo

Needless to say, the life of a store such as Patterson-Fletcher is not hu
drum. Aside from the little every-day events, there are certain peaks in t
career of the store that keep the scene enlivened.

Our 50th Anniversary is an appropriate time to recall some of our pr
vious birthdays, one of which is shown in picture number one. That w
Patterson-Fletcher's 42nd birthday. At that time the store was sponsori
one of the first man-on-the-street radio programs, and the cake cutti
was broadcast to a Northern Indiana audience.

Just 27 years ago we were emerging victorious from another war. Duri
that November, 1918, Calhoun Street saw a victory parade made up
many floats. Just as the parade was starting, Harry Fletcher spied a sm
boy leading a goat, which he promptly rented for $2. Bearing the placa
"We Got the Kaiser's Goat," this animal, led by Mr. Fletcher, paced t
Patterson Fletcher float.

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Events

A few years before—in 1915—the Lincoln Highway, which has meant to much to the development of Fort Wayne, was opened. Mr. Fletcher is shown coatless in picture three as he participated in the inauguration of the road for use.

Christmas is always an event at Patterson-Fletcher. Picture four shows the organ installed in the store each year to greet shoppers with carols. Pictures six and seven show parts of 20 Patterson-Fletcher window displays depicting Christmas in various countries. Members of U. S. Consulates in these lands helped with advice on foreign customs.

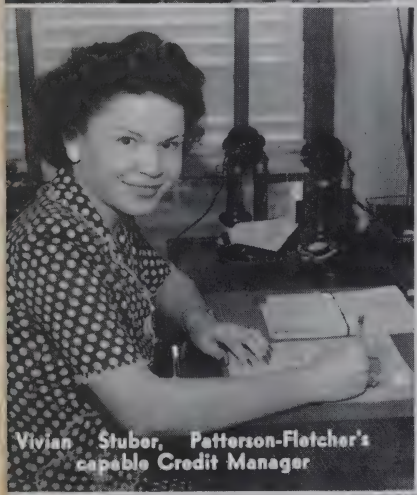
Despite the small damage of the store's one [illegible] citement on Harrison Street.

Looking back, it seems that Patterson-Fletcher [illegible] is not a sign of old age, and the store looks for[illegible] tion to the next 50 years.

George Winchell, Hat Shop Manager, Buyer of Men's Gloves and Gifts

Harvey Witmer, Manager and Buyer for Men's and Boys' Furnishings

Marion Baker, Manager of Boys —now in service



Vivian Stuber, Patterson-Fletcher's capable Credit Manager

Leo C. Ward, Fl[illegible] [illegible]erchandise Manager fo[illegible] [illegible] Wear (4th

Ralph Fitch, Tailor Shop Fo[illegible] —a helping hand at rush ti[illegible]

Ruby Blauvelt, Children's shoe Manager—a "stickler" for proper fitting

Charles Kigar, Department Manager and Buyer for Men's Trousers and Flannel Shirts

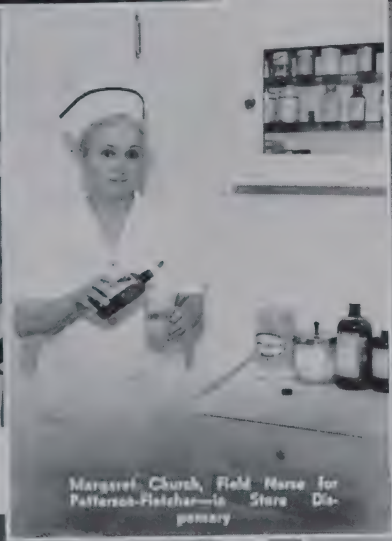
Irene Stuber, Interim Manager [illegible] Boys' Shop while Mgr. Marion Ba[illegible] is in service

Departments and Department Heads

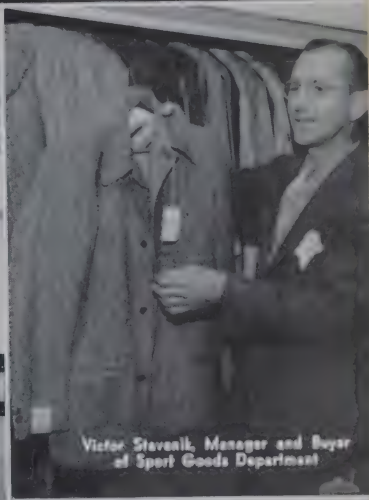
Louie Dilling, Office Manager and Accountant

Fred Ahlmeyer, Men's Shoe Manager —showing "civies" shoes to a veteran

Gilbert, Display Manager at work in his shop



Margaret Church, Field Nurse for Patterson-Fletcher—in Store Dispensary



Victor Stevenik, Manager and Buyer of Sport Goods Department

Apparel and Breeches

"Old Timers Club"—all with 25 years or more of service: (left to right) Nelson Gentis, Preston Somers, Harvery Witmer, Charles Kigar, Louie Dilling and Harry P. Fletcher.

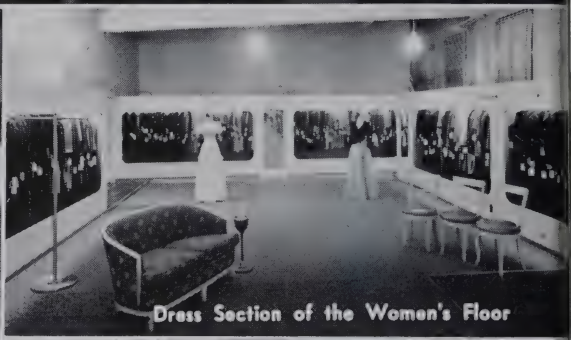
Joe Colbert, returned veteran, showing riding apparel in Sports Basement

Departments and Department Heads

Nelson Gentis, Children's Barber—often cuts hair of 3rd generation customers

A part of Patterson-Fletcher's "Moose Valley" Leather Wear Shop

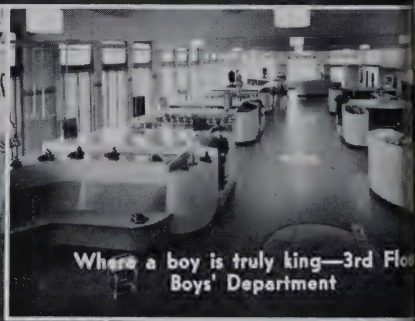
Patterson-Fletcher has been Official Boy Scout "Outfitter" for over 30 years



Dress Section of the Women's Floor

Salon on Patterson-Fletcher's Ladies' Floor

Children's Shoe Shop (3rd Floor) where growing feet are "X-rayed" for proper fit



Where a boy is truly king—3rd Floor Boys' Department

Patterson-Fletcher's First Floor

Section of spacious Industrial Department

Departments and Department Heads

Honor Roll

Argyl Bacon	Edgar Kettler	Ed. O'Rourke
Marion Baker	Douglas Kigar	Pete Rafakis
Bill Brutton	Robert Lee	Ralph Sebold
Earl Buchan	Don MacPherson	Bill Slagle
Bill Buchanan	Robert Malott	George Snyder
Joe Dickerson	Henry Miller, Jr.	Stacy Standley
Bud Ditton	Joe Moore*	James Tinker
Ben Harris	Philip Muller	Tom Urich
Jack Hodel	Robert Pease	Robert Vickers

**Killed in the service of his Country*

A Tribute

We feel deeply our debt to those who have given so much in the service of our country. A total of 27 men left Patterson-Fletcher to help maintain the ideals of democracy. To these men we pay tribute.

Although they can never be fully repaid, Patterson-Fletcher has given to each of its regular employees in service a "Civies Card," which gives them their first outfit of civilian clothing at the store's expense.

PFC

The Next 50 Years

The future of Patterson-Fletcher is dependent mainly upon the future of Fort Wayne—and the outlook for this city of well-diversified industries is excellent.

Fort Wayne has the basic qualities for continued growth and prosperity —it is now the second largest city in Indiana, with income well balanced from both agriculture and industry—a self-respecting community with 65% of its population owning its own homes.

Strategically located in the great North-Central industrial area, Fort Wayne has promise of many additional installations during the next decade or two. The city serves a trading area of 70 miles radius and is unhampered by competition from other large cities for no less than 85 miles in any direction.

But it is more than these marks of physical well-being which foretell a prosperous future—despite its 151 years of age, Fort Wayne has the vigor of youth . . . . . a pioneer spirit and democratic initiative that is always the pre-requisite for dynamic progress.

It is, therefore, with a great deal of confidence that Patterson-Fletcher looks forward not only to its own future, but also that of the entire community.

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